

1 **CLAIMS**

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3 1. A prosthesis for repair or to resist the
4 formation of an abdominal wall hernia comprising at
5 least an outer surface and an inner surface wherein
6 the inner surface forms at least one channel through
7 which, in use, an anatomical structure may pass when
8 the prosthesis is in place in the body without
9 substantial compression of said anatomical
10 structure.

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12 2. The prosthesis as claimed in claim 1 of width
13 in the range 0.5 cm to 7 cm.

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15 3. The prosthesis as claimed in claim 1 or 2 of
16 longitudinal length in the range 1 to 5 cm.

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18 4. The prosthesis as claimed in any preceding
19 claim wherein the channel is of dimensions in the
20 range 0.5 cm to 3 cm in width and depth.

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22 5. The prosthesis as claimed in any preceding
23 claim wherein the inner surface defines a scalloped
24 channel.

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26 6. The prosthesis as claimed in any preceding
27 claim wherein the channel of the prosthesis is sized
28 such that in use an anatomical structure may pass,
29 when the prosthesis is in place in the body, the
30 width of the anatomical structure being compressed
31 less than 70%.

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1 7. The prosthesis as claimed in any preceding
2 claim wherein the prosthesis has a truncated conical
3 shape.

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5 8. The prosthesis as claimed in claim 7 wherein
6 the diameter of the truncated conical shaped
7 prosthesis at the widest end of the prosthesis is in
8 the range 0.5 cm to 7 cm and the diameter of the
9 narrowest end is in the range 0.5 cm to 4 cm.

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11 9. The prosthesis as claimed in any preceding
12 claim wherein the prosthesis further comprises at
13 least one flange which extends from the prosthesis.

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15 10. The prosthesis as claimed in any preceding
16 claim wherein the flange is a portion of synthetic
17 mesh.

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19 11. Use of a prosthesis as claimed in any
20 preceding claim to repair or to resist the formation
21 of an abdominal hernia.

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23 12. Use of a prosthesis as claimed in any of claims
24 1 to 10 to repair or to resist the formation of an
25 inguinal hernia, the channel being sized to receive
26 a spermatic cord without substantial compression of
27 the spermatic cord.

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29 13. Use of a prosthesis as claimed in any of claims
30 1 to 10 to repair or to resist the formation of
31 femoral hernia the channel being sized to receive a
32 femoral vein.

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2 14. A kit including a prosthesis according to any
3 one of claims 1 to 10 and synthetic mesh to overlay
4 the prosthesis.

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6 15. A method for treating hernia comprising the
7 steps

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- exposing the hernia defect

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- providing a prosthesis wholly in the extra
peritoneal compartment of the abdominal wall
to fill the defect but which provides a
relatively pressure free passage of an
anatomical structure past the prosthesis.

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15 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the method is for
16 treatment of inguinal or femoral hernia.

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18 17. The method of claims 15 or 16 wherein the
19 prosthesis provided to fill the defect is the
20 prosthesis of any of claims 1 to 10.